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CURRENT LITERATURE.

BOOK REVIEWS.

Botanical dictionary.

IN 1900 JACKSON published the first edition of his *Glossary of botanic terms*, and last fall the second edition appeared.[1] We welcomed the first edition[2] as being a marked improvement upon any existing dictionary, and criticized but lightly the most obvious shortcomings. The compiler, most competent in many respects, had certain limitations by reason of his unfamiliarity with the content and consequently the terminology of morphology and physiology, and our general criticisms lay along these lines.

In judging the second edition one looks to see whether this weakness of the first has been removed, either by the author's own efforts, or by his associating with himself those who could supply the lacking knowledge. We find that the "revised and enlarged" of the title page means only that typographical and minor errors have been corrected in the plates of the first edition, and that a supplement of 68 pages has replaced the former "Additions during printing." One can overlook much in a first edition that cannot be forgiven in a second. Perhaps there will be a third with a resetting that will allow the necessary improvement. In that hope we may point out certain objectionable features that should receive attention.

In the first place it would be desirable to relegate to a separate list the many terms which have become obsolete, most of which are adopted from LINDLEY'S *Glossary* and were antiquated in his day. Technical language changes rapidly, and such terms should be put into a museum and labeled as exhibits, if shown at all. We should then escape reading (except we were on antiquarian research bent) that an *ovule-tube* is "a thread-like extension of the amnios, rising beyond the foramen;" and, when we turn in wonder to see what the *amnios* in plants could have been, learning that it is "a viscous fluid which surrounds certain ovules at an early stage." We do not need often to know that *prosphyses* were "abortive pistillidia of the muscal alliance," and the youngster who has occasion to look for the word should learn that both it and its definition are mere survivals from a past century.

Second, space could be gained by omitting to define common words which have no technical meaning, such as congeries, enlargement, entangled, evaporation, minute, parallel, sex, tall, wound. All of these and many others are now included.

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[1] JACKSON, BENJAMIN DAYDON, A glossary of botanic terms, with their derivation and accent. Second edition, revised and enlarged. 12mo. pp. 371. London: Duckwith & Co. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co.) 1905.

[2] BOT. GAZETTE **31**: 68. 1901.

Third, more care should be taken to make definitions sufficiently general to include the various uses of the word, rather than so special as to refer only to particular uses. Thus, *conjugate* appears as an adjective, but not as a verb; *conjugating tubes* are defined in a special and unusual sense for the Rhodophyceae and not at all for the Conjugatae; for *pistil* is given (after a wholly erroneous definition in reference to spermatophytes) an obsolete sense which is restricted to the genus Andreaea, when in the same sense it was formerly applied to the archegonia of all mosses; *retardation* is not mentioned as other than the "influence of light on growth in certain structures;" and a *fat enzyme* is defined merely as an enzyme "converting olein into oleic acid and glycerin."

Fourth, greater accuracy is sadly needed. A few examples will illustrate this: *Galvanotropic*, "curvature, etc.;" *geotropism*, "the force of gravity as shown by curvature;" *geotaxis*, "movement in plants caused by gravity;" *stamen*, "a male sporophyll;" *pistil*, "the female organ of the flower;" *staminate*, "applied to flowers which are wholly male;" *oogenesis*, "the formation of the oosphere, the early stage of the ovule" (but oosphere is correctly defined later in the same paragraph!); *sap-pressure*, "the force exerted on passing upwards through the tissues;" *spermatogenesis*, "the development of the male elements, antherozoids, pollen-grains, and analogous bodies;" and so on.

Fifth (a matter for the publisher), the use of a more flexible paper and looser binding would contribute much to the handiness of the volume.—C. R. B.

MINOR NOTICES.

The dynamics of living matter.[3]—In the spring of 1902 Professor JACQUES LOEB was invited to deliver a series of lectures at Columbia University. In these lectures, eight in number, he presented the gist of his researches upon the dynamics of living matter. This book, forming the eighth volume of the Columbia University Biological Series, is a somewhat more complete survey of the field of experimental biology, says the author, than was possible in the lectures. In ten "lectures" he discusses the general chemistry and physical constitution of living matter, certain physical manifestations of life, the rôle of electrolytes, effects of radiant energy, heliotropism and other tropisms, fertilization, heredity, and regeneration.

Through the publication of his collected papers in English in the Decennial Publications of the University of Chicago[4] Professor LOEB's point of view and the general results of his experimentation have become even more generally

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[3] LOEB, J., The dynamics of living matter. Columbia University Biological Series VIII. 8vo. pp. xii+233. *figs. 64.* New York: The Columbia University Press. 1906. $3.

[4] LOEB, J., Studies in general physiology, 1905.